

**CENTER FOR PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH
CALIFORNIA REENTRY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

**Wednesday, October 31, 2007
9:00 A.M.**

LOCATION: Sacramento Convention Center
1400 J Street
Room 306
Sacramento, California 95814

Members of the Reentry Advisory Committee (RAC) in attendance:

Chair James E. Tilton, Secretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR)
David Allan, League of California Cities
Vivian Auble, Department of Health Services (for Stan Rosenstein)
Judith Harris, CDCR Division of Adult Parole Operations
Vaughn Jeffery, California State Association of Counties
Stephen Mayberg, California Department of Mental Health
Debbie McDermott, California Catholic Conference
Shirley Melnicoe, Northern California Service League
Patrick Ogawa, County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrators Association of California
Albert Senella, California Association of Alcohol and Drug Program Executives
Gary R. Stanton, California State Sheriffs Association
Richard Word, California Police Chiefs Association
Jeff Wyly, California Labor and Workforce Development Agency

CDCR Staff Present:

Armand Burruel, Acting Director, Division of Reentry and Recidivism Reduction
Michael Carrington, Assistant Secretary, Policy Analysis and Planning
Kathryn Jett, Undersecretary, Programs
Marisela Montes, Deputy Secretary, Adult Programs

Also Present

Michael Lawler, Center for Public Policy Research, UC Davis

Lisa Whitaker, Center for Public Policy Research, UC Davis

Cynthia Radavsky, California Department of Mental Health

Craig Lea, Department of Veteran Affairs

Stacey Studebaker, Department of Veterans Affairs

1. Call to Order and Welcome

Chair Tilton called the meeting to order.

2. Approval of Charter and July 24, 2007 Minutes

Upon motion from Member Stanton, seconded by Member Wyly, the July 24, 2007 minutes were approved.

Chair Tilton stated that, for him, the fundamental issue of the reentry programs is to do a better job in CDCR of preparing people to leave the prison system, and then to do a better job of communicating and transitioning those people as they return to the community. Is the RAC recommending the right things for prisoners still under their care, so when they come back to communities they can be successfully handed off to community providers? How do we take advantage of systems that are already out there, the good programs already in place? Where can we invest to increase the capacity within the community as well as the prison system? Chair Tilton sees this as the major role for the RAC--how best to enhance the connectivity between the prison system and the community.

Chair Tilton recommended revision of objectives in the Charter from "Developing Reentry Program Funding Proposals" to "Review and Draft Budget Proposals."

Member Jeffery recommended that the first objective listed in the Charter be "to review and provide input on reentry programs as they are being developed."

Upon Motion by Member Wyly, seconded by Member Allan, the Charter (with the amendments described above) was approved.

Chair Tilton stated that they have restructured the program to better emphasize the evidence-based programs. He now has three Undersecretaries: Steve Kesser, Dave Runnels and Kathy Jett. He stated that RAC has received solid feedback from many communities (especially Monterey, San Diego and Santa Barbara) regarding reentry program locations.

Chair Tilton mentioned one issue that is outstanding--that many community providers have an expectation that CDCR can provide all programs to all parolees. Chair Tilton wants to make it clear to the providers that there are limits to what CDCR can provide, although they can certainly increase the capacity of some services.

3. RAC Feedback on Expert Panel Report

Ms. Montes provided a summary of the Expert Panel Report and its recommendations.

Chair Tilton remarked that only inmates who are programming will be moved into the reentry facilities.

Member Jeffery commented that there should be a goal that people in programming will not be mixed with people who refuse programming. Chair Tilton responded that that was exactly where they were headed; that they will identify the predators in the prison population and get them off the programming yards. This will not happen overnight but it will be done. A culture will be established in the reentry facilities, right from the beginning, of accountability on the part of prisoners, and the reentry facility will be a programming facility.

Member Allan queried as to whether or not people in reentry facilities could be teamed up with the local government to work in the parks or elsewhere in the cities. Chair Tilton responded that this idea provided a

great opportunity, along with developing a method for prisoners to build a nest egg beyond the \$200 provided by the government upon their release. In addition, the prisoner's work ethic would become known to a potential employer as they developed job experience that they could readily transfer upon their release.

Member Stanton commented on the inmate work crews that he has run, assuring other Members that the inmates are closely supervised and that the work crew programs have been very successful. He is confident they will work elsewhere as well.

Chair Tilton noted that the various assessment tools being put in place will assist in determining how best to use their resources. It's up to RAC to find out how to best spend those resources and then more resources will become available. And, as the reentry prisoners are tracked and progress is seen in terms of reduced recidivism, even more resources will become available.

Chair Tilton discussed the importance of anger management; that it is the biggest issue he has with the prison population. How do people deal with anger, how can people cope and not just react to the issues they are confronted with?

Member Word commented on the issue of peer pressure regarding volunteering for the reentry programs. Chair Tilton assured the Committee that this is not a voluntary program.

Chair Tilton commented that incentives and disincentives to programming need to be clarified. Attitudes must be changed and a way discovered to create safe environments for people who want to program.

Member Ogawa commented on the importance of continuity of care-- how is that built into the roadmap? Also, how are additional incentives developed? Chair Tilton responded that there are people in CDCR who know how to do this, how to establish a system that provides management skills and staff skills and rewards good behavior. Many tools

exist that teach people how to provide positive reinforcement for good behavior and negative reinforcement for bad behavior; on how to treat people with respect and hold them accountable for their behavior.

Member Senella echoed the concept of continuity of care, especially for the former inmates now returning to the community.

Chair Tilton emphasized the importance of continued assessment that is inmate-driven; i.e. what does the specific inmate need? For example, drug treatment is paramount for some inmates, less so for others.

Member Melnicoe discussed the importance of spirituality and the big part it can potentially play in the entire process--where does it fit in the roadmap? She also expressed concerns about prisoners who successfully program and then, upon release, are sent back to the very environment that influenced their negative behaviors initially. Chair Tilton acknowledged the importance of these issues and discussed how former inmates, now successfully re-integrated into society, are beginning to approach him to discuss these specific re-integration issues. How to prepare the family to accept and trust that person returning to society so the person does not reintegrate with their old gang or their past peers? How is that cycle broken?

Member Melnicoe asked how CDCR's culture is going to be changed as a result of this Roadmap? Chair Tilton stated that they have updated their strategic plan; that he is in the process of personally visiting all the prisons and talking to personnel; they are bringing new personnel into the system; and they are asking for and obtaining feedback from experienced personnel. The vision of what's needed has been disseminated and they have a good sense of where they want to go; now they need the "how-to," the mission for the staff. They are analyzing the successful prison programs to obtain that "how-to."

Chair Tilton discussed various personnel issues and noted that all budget positions are on track to be filled by summer 2008.

Ms. Montes urged the Committee to closely peruse Appendix B and further flesh out the specifics of integrating the community assets available for people re-entering the community. Member Ogawa stressed the need to simplify the terms and processes involved--who takes the responsibility for the ongoing communication flow needed during the re-integration process? Chair Tilton asked the Members to think about how to better accomplish the process; i.e. what are the barriers to the process and how to overcome those barriers, especially in the areas of drug treatment and mental health? How to deal with the whole person and the environment that person re-enters, an environment that may not be supportive? How can the ideas generated by the Expert Panel Report and the Committee Members become truly integrated within communities and not just become "a report on a shelf somewhere?"

Member Jeffery noted that one of the things they have learned is that a new classification of staff is needed in order to implement the individual behavior management plans discussed in Recommendation 5 of the Report. These plans are very complex and change over time. Also, there needs to be more integration, both in facilities and in the community, of the alcohol and drug treatment and mental health services. People have co-occurring concerns that need to be integrated, rather than being thought of as parallel.

4. Regional Reentry Workshops

Ms. Montes remarked that, through a collaborative effort, 10 regional workshops have been held throughout the state. Also, a video was put together detailing what Santa Barbara County has done to prepare for the reentry opportunity and that video has been shared throughout the state. The workshops sought to detail and expand on three things:

1. Explaining to the local county and region who the offender population returning to the county and region is, what risk to reoffend they pose and what kind of needs they have. The Parole

Division tailored a presentation for each region detailing who that population was;

2. Sharing information with the locals about where CDCR is in terms of the reentry process; and

3. CSA did a presentation on the preferences given to the jail bond funding.

Mr. Burruel discussed some of the major questions that arose during the workshops:

First, the issue of trust--how can local counties be assured that CDCR is going to be around after, say, five years, after the reentry facilities have been built and are underway? Who is going to pay for services inside the facility and when the parolees come out? What part will the local providers play in the planning and delivery of the various programs offered?

Another major question concerned which parolees will come through the reentry facilities; i.e., which offenders come first in the queuing/sequencing system?

Who will run the facilities? Will the state allow local experts to participate in the operation of the facility? To what extent will they be involved with the planning, quality, evaluation and outcomes of the programs?

The federal government also wants to provide input on the programs.

Does CDCR have a facility plan, design or concept?

All in all, the reentry facilities present a very complex set of issues and problems and much work lies ahead.

Chair Tilton stated that the biggest driver is the capacity for programming; i.e. what is the capacity of the community to initiate some of the programs? Thus, the facilities must be customized for the particular community.

Mr. Burruel further commented that there is clearly a sense of urgency on the part of some of the counties--they are ready to start the process now.

Member Jeffery addressed the issue of security; i.e. people going in and out of the facility to go to work, or to attend training. Cities and counties have many different work furlough programs. How will this be handled for the reentry facilities?

5. RAC Feedback on Secure Reentry Program Facility Guide

Mr. Burruel provided a history of the draft Secure Reentry Program Facilities Planning Guide, explaining that some of the entries are changing and evolving as they incorporate the feedback and advice received during the Workshops and elsewhere.

Member Senella discussed two recommendations that he had previously made--that consideration be made to add to the RAC representatives from the State Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and from the County Mental Health Directors Association. He stressed the importance of input from those two "players" in this process. Chair Tilton responded that he thought these were excellent recommendations and CDCR will contact them to assess their willingness to send representatives. In addition, if Members feel others should also be included, he would welcome those suggestions.

Member Melnicoe inquired about the possibility of union representation in the RAC. Chair Tilton stated that, although there is no union representation in the RAC, the overall reentry facility process includes other elements beyond the RAC and there is heavy union engagement in the overall process.

Member Jeffery commented on the relative remoteness of the facilities, noting this was not emphasized in the Report; i.e., the importance of an active good neighbor program for each facility.

Chair Tilton stated that, based on the 500 bed maximum per facility, there will be an area of about 20 beds for people newly arriving to the facility who are awaiting specific programming and placement, and another area to accommodate 20 or so inmates as a “mini-lockdown” to handle potential bad behavior among the reentry facility population. The remaining 460 beds will be a dorm-style environment.

Member McDermott inquired about the dorm-style environment, noting that people returning to the community will not be living in dorm-style environments; they will be living in apartments, houses, etc. How will prisoners be able to handle this type of abrupt shift when they are released to the community?

Chair Tilton stated that the preliminary facility design model has a transition from dorms to individual rooms to mini-apartments; and CDCR is currently debating internally on how best to deal with the transition phase. Ms. Montes echoed the importance of incorporating the movement from a more structured to a less structured environment and how that will be manifested.

Chair Tilton’s model is that CDCR will own, run and maintain the facilities and the local entity will be contracted to run the programs.

6. Overview of AB 900

Mr. Burruel highlighted some of the concepts of AB 900:

To provide for public safety by moving government, at the local and state levels, into a collaborative mode to move forward on the siting of reentry facilities and also to provide for a total of 53,000 beds overall for adult offenders.

To sponsor and move forward the concept of offender rehabilitation services, built upon "evidence-based programs;" i.e. research-based programs that have been proven to reduce recidivism. Assessments for adult offenders shall be done as a process, not only while they are in the prison system, but also when on parole, and programs should be matched to the adult offender based on needs assessments conducted for this purpose.

The concept of needs assessment will be supported by a comprehensive case management system.
Reentry facilities will be for rehabilitation and intensive programming.

The jail bond funds will be disseminated through a competitive RFP process, although reentry facility bed construction will be a non-competitive process determined by need on a county-by-county basis.

Chair Tilton remarked that two strike teams were appointed by the Governor's Office to determine how best to address the issues involved in implementing AB 900.

Ms. Jett discussed her involvement with the strike teams, the 13 benchmarks listed as deliverables in phase one of AB 900 and tied to funding for phase two, and the challenges and obstacles connected with the various issues involved.

Members discussed the reality that most communities are overwhelmed in terms of providing services; communities have limited resources and many programs have been cut; the system is bursting at the seams already, and finding a way to mitigate this reality is key to successful reentry. There was additional acknowledgement that the services need to be augmented for those at risk *before* they enter prison (through vocational education and other means), not only when they are imprisoned or about to reenter society.

Ms. Jett commented on feedback received from various stakeholders who are frustrated by the lack of an entry point to provide services to inmates; many of these providers think reentry facilities would be perfect in terms of providing this entry point.

Member Ogawa again stressed the importance of continuity of care and ensuring that systems within the community are not bidding against each other but rather are working together.

Chair Tilton remarked that California will now have the opportunity to see which parts and programs of reentry really work and which don't.

7. Brainstorming process for developing long-term strategy for coordination/integration of various state and local systems

From the "Next Steps" section of the binder: *1. Identify ways to interface with the community and stimulate community involvement.*

A strong education campaign is needed to reach out and promote the reentry facilities. The unfortunate reality is that most people think that people go off to prison and are never heard from again. Although 95%+ of prisoners will be released back into the community, public perception of this reality is extremely limited. How to educate the communities regarding this false perception? How to educate public officials on the value of the reentry facility effort and enable them to recognize that simply taking a stand against reentry, without offering an alternative, is not acceptable?

In addition, there is a distinct lack of public awareness about the entire reentry facility effort.

Some suggestions on how to promote reentry facilities and expand public awareness:

- Develop a local network of providers and elected officials who will work to convince the community that this is good public safety.

- Use law enforcement people, who are trustworthy to most citizens, to educate the public.
- A campaign on reentry, not just on reentry facilities, is needed.
- Start with public officials and eventually reach out to the community in general.
- Publicize the reality that the local economies surrounding where prisons have been built have all improved since the prisons were constructed.
- Remind people that all the issues discussed at each RAC meeting are on the CDCR webpage. Many press members currently reference the webpage. Also, make sure Members have access to all the information listed there.
- The interaction during PACT meetings positively impacts the process-- for example, conversations in the city of Fresno resulted in a major reentry program beginning within the city limits.
- Senior parole agents consistently state that the #1 thing they ask for is better parolees. When parolees utilize appropriate programs and are given enough time, they can consistently reenter society successfully and as better citizens. Thus, ensure that prison time is spent on a future parolee's individual issues and concerns--drug treatment, anger management, vocational education, etc.
- It is very difficult to get people to attend new meetings in addition to the ones they already attend. Successful communities have city-wide and county-wide groups that get together on a regular basis to address their various issues; i.e., structured meeting processes already exist in many communities. CDCR can approach these already existing groups about the positive values associated with reentry facilities.

- Talk to service clubs at their regular meetings. Also, association conferences that are provider-oriented is another place to visit.
- Recognize that the average person is not going to attend another meeting. Thus, the reentry facility campaign must be integrated into already existing meetings. But in order for people to grasp the reentry concept, they must first grasp the fact that parolees are part of the community--a reality that is not readily accepted.
- Utilize the local press, they are genuinely interested in the message.
- Develop a PowerPoint presentation (and make it available on the CDCR website) that others can download and present at their local meetings. This can be done in conjunction with personal visits by RAC representatives.
- Recognize that being creative in crafting the message is key, especially in commuter communities.
- Recognize that fear is a driving force that stops people from looking at reentry.
- There is the potential that a "bigger bang for the buck" might occur through the use of TV as an advertising medium for the campaign.
- Debbie McDermott, Shirley Melnicoe and Patrick Ogawa volunteered to become members of a sub-committee to create a communication strategy and look at press/public communications.
- Chair Tilton and staff will put together a plan for a public awareness campaign and run it by the subcommittee for their thoughts. It will focus on two things:

1. Communicating with the public; and

2. Educating people through attendance at already existing meetings of various kinds.

Other Member suggestions:

- On how to better coordinate state and local systems: CDCR has worked in partnership for decades with Castles. There is an opportunity at future meetings to talk about how CDCR is going to change its organization to work more effectively with communities; they will be able to integrate with communities rather than strictly "working within its own walls and then going home."
- A recent report detailed interviews with ex-offenders who have been clean and sober and self-sufficient for many years and the influences that caused that. Two influences consistently emerge--vocation and a faith-based personal belief system. RAC needs to work more on how to connect with the vocational and faith-based community, not only during the inmate's prison time, but for many years after as well.
- Regarding matching offenders' needs with appropriate treatment programs; much information on the subject has been written by Doug Marlowe, a Professor at the University of Pennsylvania. RAC would benefit from closely scrutinizing his work.
- The "ban the box" issue (the box on employment applications that asks "have you been arrested?") work needs to be done to break down the barriers to hiring people who check "yes" in the box.
- Recognize that the vast majority of prisoners accept plea bargains rather than going to jail. They then sit in reception centers at city and/or county jails for approximately 30 days before being assigned to a particular prison. Consider assessing these people during this 30 day period to accelerate the initiation of programming.
- Research additional methods for assisting parolees in changing their environments in the near future.

- Also in the future, prisoners released to the community from the reentry facilities could possibly become excellent spokespersons for reentry, capable of reaching a different population than RAC and CDCR can.

8. Public Comments

Mr. Craig Lea, Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), reported that at least 10% of those incarcerated are veterans. There are 4-5 VA regions that provide services to veterans but many incarcerated veterans do not understand that they are eligible for services upon release.

Currently, the VA is in about 17 California prisons providing outreach, and this has been successful. The VA would appreciate the opportunity to speak at a systemic level on how to coordinate their efforts with CDCR. The VA initiative is to recognize veterans six months prior to their release, clinically assess them and prepare them for their release, and then, when they are being released to the community, to follow them and provide services to them.

The VA is very interested in having follow-up discussions on how to better serve these veterans. They provide many different services to veterans and can also provide an environment for fellow veterans which re-instills a sense of pride for the veteran and promote reduced recidivism.

Ms. Stacy Studebaker, VA, spoke about specific services offered by the VA. One service is the continuum of care, specifically for homeless veterans. The VA has the largest program in the world in this area and has done extensive research on evidence-based practices, and she will provide the website detailing how the VA "teases out" the various success measurements. An almost identical assessment tool is being used to measure their incarcerated veteran population, who will be tracked over the subsequent years of this particular program as it evolves.

The VA goes into the prisons and performs initial assessments to identify the issues involved--substance abuse, mental health, homelessness, etc.

so they can address these issues when the veterans return to their communities. Since VA locations exist throughout the state, virtually any area a veteran discharges to has VA services within 50-100 miles (or less). All VA housing endeavors are done with community partners, who do the programming, and the VA provides the funding as well as large research component.

Ms. Studebaker stated that the greatest asset that CDCR has is the inmates themselves, as they are there 24 hours per day. As the VA and CDCR is able to reach more inmates, the inmates themselves can do most of the jobs necessary for successful programming. She hopes that the VA is able to take some of the burden off the shoulders of CDCR so CDCR can concentrate on other populations that don't have the huge resources that the federal government can bring to bear.

The Iraqi and Afghanistan veterans are returning and the VA is now seeing some of them in jails. Many current lifers are Vietnam veterans who came back to the U.S. and didn't get treatment, who were addicted or had PTSD, and the VA has made a commitment to not let that happen with these returning veterans. They are making a particular effort to identify the Iraqi veterans. Ms. Studebaker stated that she and the VA are committed to the achievement of the goals she articulated.

Chair Tilton requested that a separate meeting be set up between CDCR and the VA to ensure that they facilitate the VA program.

Ms. Jett suggested that the VA be included in some of the public education messages.

Mr. Carrington discussed some of the issues CDCR is working on that relate to public awareness of the reentry facility. He noted the significant numbers of people coming out of the system--over the next three years in California there will be between 60,000 and 70,000 returning to the community. Who can CDCR partner with numerically to match those numbers? One of the best sources is the faith-based community--and

they are working on creating public-private partnerships to promote better outcomes than are currently experienced.

One idea under discussion is to have faith-based congregations literally adopt individuals and their families into a nurturing social structure for however long it takes to guarantee a more successful outcome.

Faith-based mentoring is another possibility; building relationships with offenders so that when they exit the system they are literally met and moved into nurturing environments. It is hoped these relationships can be established early on.

A large faith-based coalition is also a politically powerful group of people that can assist in helping public officials to look closely at the reentry facilities and move toward overcoming the NIMBYism [Not In My Back Yard] inherent in many areas.

10. Next Steps

The next meeting will be sometime in February. The possibility of a different meeting location was considered, perhaps in Southern California. Member Jeffery stated his organization would be glad to host the meeting. Arrangements will be made. The meeting may include a facility visit.

Chair Tilton asked that Members communicate other thoughts to CDCR that occur to them on how to facilitate accessing their particular community. He stated that, in terms of timing, the education effort seems critical.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m.